countries is based on abiding and cou.-r only shared concern$_s$ such as the need for expanded bilateral trade and investment, cooperation in the promotion of ;;!:ernationa[peace and security, disarmament, development and environmental ccnservaiion, for which a large measure c' bipartisan support exists in the US Congress.

As p^{ai}t of iheir normal functions, our Ambassador and other Mission Officials maiatai l regular contact with a wide circle of Senaiors and Congressmen and their Staffers' of both the Democratic and Republican parties$_f$ and provide them extensive briefings and material on issues of re eve nee to Tndo-TJS relations. Our Mission shall acively pursue such interactions with Congress particularly with the elected members. As in the last Congress, ihe new Congress includes-many Repub'ican$_s$ who have been sunnortive of strengthening Indo-US friendshio and understanding. A very larce proportion of the Congressional Caucus on India and fndian-Amer-cans have ^pen re-elected, several of whom are Republicans. Government have teen encouracin-i members *o^r* Congress and tlieir St"nffers to visit Tndia to gain $_a$ better understanding of India nrH mutual bcffifq of strengthening in^o-US relations. An exDanded programme of S"<-h hicft-'evM exchanges between our le^'sbtures is be>ng worked out.

Poaching of one Horned Rhino in Kaziranga National Park, Assam

J 078. SHRI BHADRESWAR GOH-AIN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for not taking any effective steps to prevent poaching of one-horned Rhino in the Kaziranga Na tional Park in Assam.

(b) whether Government are aware that due to regular poaching this rare species of world famous animal will ex tinct in the near future; and

(c) whether Government will direct the Assam Government to take effective me asures to prevent poaching and monito* by a Cehtral Agency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) Despite several measuers taken by the Government, rhino poaching in Kaziranga National Park had become a serious problem. Rhino are killed mainly due to tho great demand of rhino horns abroad fot its ascribed medicinal values and for use as dagger handles. However, due to preventive measures takeh by the Government there has been a decline in poaching cases in the last two years as may be seen from the following figures;

Year	1992	1993	1994 (Upto November, 94)
No. of Rhinos killed . . .	48	40	10

The measures taken by the Govern-ment to protect the Rhino popu'ation include:

(i) Rhino is placed in Schedule 1 o^ Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 getting/the highest level o' protection.

(ii) Trading in Rhino parts, and product, is also banned by law.

(ut) A network of Wildlife Santuartes and National Parks has been set tip for conservation of the species and its habitat. Ffaancial assistance is provided by the Central Government for development of national parks and sanctuaries.

(iv) Centra! Assistance has been pro-vided to the State for strengthening anti-

poaching infrastructure ahd extension of Kaziranga Park area.

(v) Cooperation of police, BSF DR1 and Army is also taken as and when required, in apprehending the poachers and illegal traders.

(vi) India is a member of Convention on International Trade jn Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna-(CITES) and abides by the regulations of international trade in on dangered Species of animals and articles made thereof under the provisions of the Convention.

(vii) Wtih the view to providing alternative home for Rhihos and also to rehabilitating them in their erstwhile habitat, scheme for 'Rehabilitation of Rhinos' has been started in Dudhwar National Park in Uttar Pradesh;

(viii) National Action Plan for Conservation of Rhino in India has been prepared and efforts are being made to seek international assistance.

वाह और सागर सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को स्वीकृति प्रदान किया जाना

1079. **श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव : क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :**

(क) क्या सरकार ने मध्य प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा भेजी गई वाह और सागर सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को स्वीकृति प्रदान कर दी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है ;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं ;

(घ) क्या गत तीन वर्ष के दौरान सरकार को इस संबंध में संसद सदस्यों से कोई अभ्यावेदन प्राप्त हुए हैं ; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो उनका ब्यौरा क्या है और इस संबंध में सरकार ने क्या कार्यवाही की है ?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री कमल नाथ) : (क)से (ग) संजय सागर (वाह) सिंचाई परियोजना के निर्माण के प्रस्ताव को वन (संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1980 और पर्यावरण की दृष्टि से गुण-दोषों के आधार पर अस्वीकृत किया गया है । इस प्रस्ताव की विस्तृत जांच करने के पश्चात् पर्यावरण पर इसके प्रतिकूल प्रभाव और पर्याप्त पुनर्वास के बिना अनेक लोगों में विस्थापन के कारण इसे अस्वीकृत किया गया है ।

(घ) और (ङ) गत तीन वर्षों के दौरान इस प्रस्ताव पर पुनर्विचार करने के लिये संसद सदस्यों से पत्र प्राप्त हुए हैं । इन पत्रों की प्राप्ति के पश्चात् राज्य सरकार से इस प्रस्ताव के पुनर्विचार के लिये कतिपय ब्यौरे भेजने का अनुरोध किया गया है । ये ब्यौरे अभी तक राज्य सरकार से प्राप्त नहीं हुए हैं ।

Dabhol Power Project

1080. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the environmentalists, at a public hearing ot controversial Dabhol Power "roject in Bombay, have asked Government to increase the safety zone of the project ;n *he* light of the disaster in Egypt recently kil.ing over 400 people, if so, the details f.ereof; and